



Mr Mark Lee undertaking his scarless breast reconstruction technique while breast cancer specialist Professor Christobel Saunders undertakes a double mastectomy, assisted by Dr Robert Owen

## Many benefits from 'scarless' breast reconstruction technique

A new minimally-invasive breast surgery technique being undertaken at St John of God Subiaco Hospital is providing a potentially less confronting option for women.

Plastic surgeon Mr Mark Lee has developed an innovative and scarless breast reconstruction technique he hopes will make the decision to have a preventative double mastectomy easier for women.

The plastic reconstructive surgeon's pioneering scarless latissimus dorsi (LD flap) technique for breast reconstruction is receiving international recognition for its benefits to patients.

The procedure allows the patient's muscle flap to effectively be harvested without scars on the patient's back.

Mark said the procedure is less invasive for women as it is done through the mastectomy wound.

"The procedure is a bilateral procedure and a modification of an existing breast reconstructive surgical technique," he said.

"In existing surgical techniques, multiple incisions are often made via the breast and back to access muscle tissues.

"My new technique leads to shorter operative time, lower complication rates, discharge home is on average a day and a half earlier and it provides similar cosmetic outcomes.

"Three quarters of women having traditional LD flap operations and the new scarless technique rated their aesthetic results good to excellent, with some suggestion of better outcomes after scarless surgery."

Another benefit of the procedure is that it can be undertaken with a mastectomy, so patients don't have to wait to undergo further surgery for the reconstruction.

Mark said the procedure is ideal for young women who are generally predisposed to developing breast cancer and considering bilateral preventative surgery.

"This technique is ideal for preventative mastectomy in high risk patients as it significantly reducing the risk of developing breast cancer and offers

aesthetically better results by reducing post-operative scarring," he said.

"Young women who choose to have preventative mastectomies now have a surgical option that is less invasive and potentially less emotionally confronting for them."

Mark has been using the procedure since 2008 and performed the technique on more than 150 patients to date.

His work has earned him the prestigious American Society of Plastic Surgery Award and has been published in international and national journals.